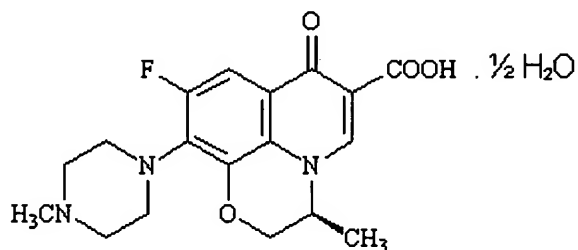


**In the claims:**

Please amend claims 18, 20 and 21 as follows:

1. (Original) A process for the preparation of pure (S)-9-fluoro-3-methyl-10-(4-methyl-1-piperazinyl)-7-oxo-2,3-dihydro-7H-pyrido[1,2,3-di][1,4]-benzoxazine-6-carboxylic acid hemihydrate (levofloxacin hemihydrate) of Formula I,



**FORMULA I**

the process comprising obtaining a solution of crude levofloxacin in one or more organic solvents; removing the solvent; maintaining a moisture content of reaction mass from about 0.5%w/w to about 1.5%w/w; and isolating the pure levofloxacin hemihydrate.

- 1 2. (Original) The process of claim 1, wherein the solution of crude levofloxacin is  
2 obtained by heating the solvent.
- 1 3. (Original) The process of claim 2, wherein the heating temperature ranges from about  
2 30 °C to about 100°C.
- 1 4. (Original) The process of claim 3, wherein the heating temperature ranges from about  
2 40 °C to about 60°C.
- 1 5. (Original) The process of claim 1, wherein the organic solvent comprises one or more  
2 of chlorinated hydrocarbon, hydrocarbon, ester, or mixtures thereof.
- 1 6. (Original) The process of claim 5, wherein the chlorinated hydrocarbon comprises  
2 one or more of chloroform, dichloromethane, and 1,2-dichloroethane.

- 1 7. (Original) The process of claim 6, wherein the chlorinated hydrocarbon is  
2 dichloromethane.
- 1 8. (Original) The process of claim 5, wherein the hydrocarbon comprises one or more of  
2 hexane, cyclohexanes, and toluene.
- 1 9. (Original) The process of claim 5, wherein the ester comprises one or more of methyl  
2 acetate, and ethyl acetate.
- 1 10. (Original) The process of claim 9, wherein the ester is ethyl acetate.
- 1 11. (Original) The process of claim 1, wherein removing the solvent comprises one or  
2 more of distillation, and distillation under vacuum.
- 1 12. (Original) The process of claim 1, further comprising adding a base before removal of  
2 the organic solvent.
- 1 13. (Original) The process of claim 11, wherein the base is triethylamine.
- 1 14. (Original) The process of claim 1, wherein the moisture content of the reaction mass  
2 is maintained by adding water.
- 1 15. (Original) The process of claim 1, wherein isolating the pure levofloxacin  
2 hemihydrate comprises one or more of filtration, filtration under vacuum, decantation,  
3 and centrifugation.
- 1 16. (Original) The process of claim 1, further comprising additional drying of the product  
2 obtained.
- 1 17. (Original) The process of claim 1, further comprising forming the product obtained  
2 into a finished dosage form.
- 1 18. (Currently Amended) The A method of treating a patient of claim 25 wherein the in  
2 ~~need of an antimicrobial therapy, the method comprising providing a dosage form to~~

3 ~~said patient that includes~~ levofloxacin hemihydrate is prepared by the process of claim  
4 1.

1 19. (Original) Levofloxacin hemihydrate having a purity of more than 99.0% by HPLC.

1 20. (Currently Amended) The Llevofloxacin hemihydrate of claim 19, having a purity of  
2 more than 99.5% by HPLC.

1 21. (Currently Amended) The Llevofloxacin hemihydrate of claim 19, having a purity of  
2 more than 99.8% by HPLC.

1 22. (Original) Pure levofloxacin hemihydrate, which is essentially free of levofloxacin  
2 monohydrate.

1 23. (Original) The pure levofloxacin hemihydrate of claim 21, wherein the levofloxacin  
2 hemihydrate has the X-ray diffraction pattern of Figure 1.

1 24. (Original) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a therapeutically effective  
2 amount of pure levofloxacin hemihydrate; and one or more pharmaceutically  
3 acceptable carriers, excipients or diluents.

1 25. (Original) A method of treating a patient in need of an antimicrobial therapy, the  
2 method comprising providing a dosage form to said patient that includes pure  
3 levofloxacin hemihydrate.